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AUDITOR GENERAL

STATE OF ARIZONA  
OFFICE OF THE  
**AUDITOR GENERAL**

WILLIAM THOMSON  
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

January 27, 2006

The Honorable Laura Knaperek, Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable Robert Blendu, Vice Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Representative Knaperek and Senator Blendu :

Our Office has recently completed a 24-month followup of the Department of Economic Security's Division of Children, Youth and Families, Child Protective Services—Caseloads and Training regarding the implementation status of the 29 audit recommendations (including sub-parts of the recommendations) presented in the performance audit report released in October 2003 (Auditor General Report No. 03-09). As the attached grid indicates:

- 22 have been implemented, and
- 7 are in the process of being implemented.

In prior followups, the Department indicated that it would not implement Finding 1, recommendation 1, regarding modifying its process for projecting case manager staffing needs. However, after further discussion with our Office during the 24-month followup, the Department indicated it will be looking at ways to modify its process to better ensure accurate staffing projections. Therefore, our Office recommends that we continue to followup in 6 months on the status of those recommendations not yet fully implemented.

Sincerely,

Debbie Davenport  
Auditor General

DD:Acm  
Attachment

cc: David Berns, Director  
Department of Economic Security

Mary Lou Q. Hanley, Deputy Director  
Department of Economic Security—Division of Children, Youth and Families

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**  
**Division of Children, Youth and Families**  
**Child Protective Services—Caseloads and Training**  
**24-Month Follow-Up Report To**  
**Auditor General Report No. 03-09**

**FINDING 1: Several changes needed to accurately project case manager staffing needs**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
<p>1. The Division should take steps to ensure that it can accurately project its case manager staffing needs. The Division should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cases can be classified on its computerized case management system according to standards;</li> <li>b. It includes only cases that are actively worked; and</li> <li>c. It includes all positions that regularly manage cases in its count of authorized case management positions.</li> </ul>	<p>Implementation in Process</p> <p>Implementation in Process</p> <p>Implementation in Process</p>	

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**FINDING 1: Several changes needed to accurately project case manager staffing needs (concl'd)**

Recommendation	Status of Implementing Recommendation	Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented
<p>2. The Division should also investigate factors that may be hindering its ability to effectively manage its caseloads, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continuing to investigate reasons for case manager turnover, attempting to fill vacant case manager positions, and researching best practices for enhancing retention; and</li> <li>b. Continuing to assess ways to streamline its case management processes, eliminate tasks, and assign case management tasks to support workers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented at 6 Months</b></p> <p>Implementation in Process</p>	
<p>3. The Division should establish appropriate caseload standards for Arizona. In doing so, the Division should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assess workload factors through such means as focus groups with staff; and</li> <li>b. Document any factors that are used to justify using CWLA's standards or Arizona-specific standards.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented at 24 Months</b></p> <p><b>Implemented at 24 Months</b></p>	

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**FINDING 2: Training hours have significantly increased, but other improvements needed**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
1. The Division should revise its training curriculum to include additional practical classroom exercises for the computerized case management system, writing court reports, making referrals for services, and conducting interviews.	<b>Implemented at 24 Months</b>	
2. The Division should continue to take steps to ensure that the field portion of the training is implemented consistently state-wide.	Implementation in Process	
3. The Division should continue to use its exit interview surveys to assess why new case managers are leaving and develop strategies for addressing poor retention of new case managers.	<b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>	

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**FINDING 2: Training hours have significantly increased, but other improvements needed (cont'd)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
<p>4. The Division should continue with its plans to revise its training evaluation forms. In doing so, the Division should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Make certain that trainees are informed of the importance of their feedback for ensuring an effective training program and are strongly encouraged or required to provide feedback.</li> <li>b. Consider collaborating with the Arizona State University School of Social Work to help revise its forms.</li> <li>c. Examine using additional mechanisms to evaluate its new case manager trainee program, such as obtaining feedback from new trainees' supervisors and mentors through either questionnaires or focus groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented at 18 Months</b></p>   <p><b>Implemented at 18 Months</b></p>   <p><b>Implemented at 6 Months</b></p>	

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**FINDING 2: Training hours have significantly increased, but other improvements needed (concl'd)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
<p>5. To ensure the Division complies with the legislative mandate regarding not assigning caseload duties to trainees, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish written policy that prohibits trainees from being assigned as the primary or only case manager on a case, and clarifies that trainees may be assigned case tasks only for training purposes.</li> <li>b. Ensure that all appropriate individuals are informed of this policy.</li> <li>c. Develop and implement a mechanism or process to routinely monitor its trainees' work assignments.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implemented at 24 Months</b></p>  <p><b>Implemented at 24 Months</b></p>  <p>Implementation in Process</p>	

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**FINDING 3: Steps needed to improve case manager supervisory oversight**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
1. The Division should determine an appropriate supervisor-to-case manager ratio for Arizona by assessing and documenting workload factors impacting its supervisors, such as turnover and staff experience level.	<b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>	
2. Once the Division has determined an appropriate supervisor-to-staff ratio for Arizona, the Division should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Explore the feasibility of reallocating existing supervisors' positions within the districts to ensure that all districts meet the approved standards; and,</li> <li>b. Determine if any new positions could be funded from its existing budget.</li> </ul>	<b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>  <b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>	
3. The Division should take steps to fill vacant supervisor positions.	<b>Implemented at 12 Months</b>	

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**FINDING 3: Steps needed to improve case manager supervisory oversight (concl'd)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
4. The Division should develop and implement strategies for increasing CPS supervisor retention, including continuing the accreditation process through the Council on Accreditation.	<b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>	
5. The Division should deliver a comprehensive training program to new and existing CPS supervisors to ensure they are equipped with the appropriate level of skills needed to complete their job. To do so, the Division should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure consistent delivery of the supervisor core curriculum to newly promoted CPS supervisors.</li> <li>b. Continue to use its supervisor workgroup to identify ways to improve the supervisory training.</li> <li>c. Develop a standardized continuing education program specifically focused on the CPS supervisors' professional development needs.</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Implemented at 12 Months</b>   <b>Implemented at 12 Months</b>             Implementation in Process         </div>	



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**FINDING 4: Efforts needed to further improve children’s permanency outcomes**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
1. The Division should enhance concurrent case planning within its new case manager training to include the assessment tool that should be used to help determine whether concurrent case planning is appropriate. In doing so, it may want to review the curriculum developed by Lutheran Community Services Northwest.	<b>Implemented at 18 Months</b>	
2. The Division should provide additional state-wide training on concurrent case planning to all existing case managers and supervisors, and ensure that they attend this training.	<b>Implemented at 24 Months</b>	
3. The Division should continue to seek technical assistance from the national resource centers to develop and conduct concurrent case planning training for existing staff.	<b>Implemented at 12 Months</b>	
4. The Division should provide information on concurrent case planning to stakeholders such as assistant attorneys general, foster-home recruitment agencies, and juvenile court judges.	<b>Implemented at 12 Months</b>	

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**FINDING 4: Efforts needed to further improve children's permanency outcomes (concl'd)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status of Implementing Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented</b>
5. The Division should continue to research and apply other best-practice strategies that increase permanency.	Implemented at 12 Months	